



Lieutenant Governor Byron Mallott
STATE OF ALASKA

October 3, 2016

Dear AFN Citizen Award Selection Committee;

It's not often that one writes a letter on behalf of someone who sued you. But in this case, it is an honor and a pleasure to support BBNC's nomination of shareholder Mike Toyukak for the 2016 AFN Citizen Award.

When I was sworn into office as Lt. Governor in December 2014, I inherited the Toyukak vs. Treadwell language assistance lawsuit. One of my duties is to oversee elections and I take the job very seriously. I knew that we could not begin our journey to make Alaska's election process one of the best in the country until this case was settled.

The first time I met Mike and his wife, Anecia, was in a formal federal courtroom where settlement discussions would take place. It was intimidating to be in a room full of lawyers and a federal judge.

But the judge allowed me to meet with the plaintiffs without our attorneys or other officials. It is probably the first time salmon strips, pilot bread and nagoon berry jam were consumed in a federal jury room. I listened as the plaintiffs, including Mike, Anecia, Frank Logusak from Togiak, and Allan Hayton from Fort Yukon told me their side of the story.

I was deeply moved. It took many more months, but finally, a settlement was reached. I believe we demonstrated our commitment to making bilingual materials available to rural voters with a settlement that I consider the floor not the ceiling.

We hired a new Division of Elections Director. Josie Bahnke has worked tirelessly since then to implement the settlement, including the hiring of a full time language assistance manager. Indra Arriaga began implementing these complex improvements quickly and engaged enthusiastic Native language speakers in the process.

On August 16 I flew to Manokotak to observe the primary election. It was an honor to meet Mike and Anecia, but under much happier circumstances. At their city hall, the poll workers were busy and the bilingual translators were on the job. We also flew to Togiak and New Stuyahok to observe the elections and Mike and Anecia came with us. It was a day I won't forget.

AFN Citizen's Award Selection Committee
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I am firmly committed to seeing that all eligible Alaskans have a meaningful opportunity to participate in our democracy. Mike Toyukak moved the State of Alaska in the right direction. His courage and conviction has made a difference in the lives of thousands of rural voters and I support BBNC's nomination for Mike to receive AFN's Citizen of the Year Award for 2016.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Byron I. Mallott", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Byron I. Mallott
Lieutenant Governor